M/053/005

State of Utah
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DIVISION OF OIL, GAS AND MINING

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September 15, 1995

TO: Minerals File

FROM: Tony Gallegos, Reclamation Engineer aag

RE: Site Inspection, USMX of Utah, Goldstrike Mine, M/053/005, Washington County, Utah

Date of Inspection: September 13, 1995
Time of Inspection: 920 - 1500
Conditions: Clear skies, cool (morning)
Participants: Alan Wilson, Jim Smith - USMX; Larry Gore - BLM; Tony Gallegos, Tom Munson - DOGM

Purpose of Inspection: To examine recently performed reclamation in order to adjust the reclamation surety

On the way into this site, the county road crews were working on the access road. This access road is now being maintained by the county. At this time they were regrading the road surface and reconstructing some portions of the road down through the wash.

We first met in the offices for a general review of the maps and areas we would be visiting. Some of the permit areas which were proposed, but were not mined or disturbed, were the Picaroon Pit and the two Arsenic Pits. Other modifications affected the Beavertail pit (not created as large as planned) and the two adjacent Caribou and Moosehead pits (which grew into one longer pit).

At this time, USMX has plans to regrade Heap #1 which they have been rinsing. They hope the latest water sampling will meet DWQ's neutralization standards. They would like to regrade the heap this winter if DWQ is satisfied with the neutralization. At this time, the mine is still circulating leachate through the processing system. Ferric sulfate is being added to the solutions to precipitate the unusually high arsenic values. At this time the arsenic values coming off of Heap #1 are still exceeding the drinking water standards. USMX's tentative schedule is to have reclamation of the entire site completed by the year 1997.

Padre Pit Area

The first site visited was the Padre Pit area. Reclamation at this area was about 1 year old. Access to this area is on foot because the road access off the main road has been reclaimed. You can only drive up a short portion of the road. The reclaimed areas had a good surface roughness with furrowing along the contour. The soils here contained a large amount of rock

which would aid in minimizing erosion. For this area being seeded one year ago, the revegetation success is impressive. The unusually high amount or precipitation has obviously aided the revegetation results.

We next proceeded to walk to what is called the Lower Padre area, which is over the ridge from the main Padre pit. Reclamation in most of this area is at least two years old; and while the plants seem to be larger and more vigorous, the diversity was not as great as on the other side which had only been seeded one year ago. Earlier this year USMX had come down into this lower Padre area and repaired an erosional "blowout" off this lower pad area. They have now created a diversion to direct runoff back into the corner of an existing drainage. The area affected by this repair work has not been seeded. The steep section of reclaimed access road leading down to the lower Padre contains a number of dozer basins to help minimize the erosion. We found a small unidentified toad in this area. The operator indicated these toads have been common on this part of the mine site. Photographs were taken of the Padre, the lower Padre and a general overview of the USMX mine site before we broke for lunch.

Quail Creek Dam

After lunch the first area visited is what was called the Quail Creek Dam. This was a dam of a small drainage behind Heap Leach #2. The face of this dam has been revegetated some time ago and so we did not examine this area during this inspection.

We next drove up what is called the Quail Spring Road. This road will remain after reclamation to allow access through the site. The road will eventually connect with the other main access road that the county is now taking responsibility for.

Along this road were some old exploration sites that had been reclaimed. Some of the reclamation work in this area is three years old. The earth work in these reclaimed areas is exceptional; and, at this time, the revegetation, in general, looks good from a distance. We were not onsite to evaluate the revegetation success of these exploration areas so we did not examine them closer.

The next area visited was overlooking the two earthen infiltration ponds that have been constructed as a backup in case the current lined pond overflows. These two earthen ponds are located to the southeast of Leach Pad #1. The design and implementation of these ponds is currently being reviewed by the Division of Water Quality. The purpose of the ponds will be to contain excess water that cannot be contained in the lined pond. This is thought to be a better approach than to have a controlled release and have these waters leave the site. These ponds are not lined, and the water would be diverted into the pond and allowed to infiltrate into the soils.

The next area visited was down the old access road. This road is proposed to remain to allow access to private property. There are several cabins on private property in this area. There are still some negotiations going on between the mine operator and the private property owners as to whether or not that road will actually remain unreclaimed. It is uncertain whether DOGM has acknowledged this post mine use of the road - we will need to review the file.

Along this old road were some silt fences that were put in when USMX was using this as the main access road. Also down this drainage is an old stamp mill that is believed to be located on private lands. There is a short spur road leading off the old access road which goes to the old powder magazine location. This road has not been reclaimed yet.

The main access road currently being used has been reclaimed down to a single lane width for a majority of the distance. This road was previously 80-100 feet wide to accommodate haul trucks between the various pits.

Caribou Pit

The next area visited was the Caribou Pit. Photographs of this pit will show a hump in the middle with the highwall in the background. Reclamation of this area is approximately one year old. The regraded pit slopes and pit floor have been topsoiled. There was some sediment loading evident at this site. There were some access road outslopes near the Caribou Pit that are currently being topsoiled. This section of outslopes remain to be ripped and seeded.

We then proceeded on the road from the Caribou to the Beavertail. The section of road leading into the Beavertail Pit has been topsoiled, but not yet water bared or seeded. USMX plans to construct these water bars and seed this portion of the road in the fall of 1995.

Moosehead Pit

The next area visited was the Moosehead Pit. Photos of this pit will show some highwalls in the background. Reclamation of this area is approximately one year old. This pit was backfilled more than USMX had originally anticipated, due to the timing of other pit operations which allowed them to place more material in the pit. The Moosehead Pit area has been backfilled, topsoiled and seeded.

Moosehead Dump or West Dump

The next area visited was the Moosehead Dump or what has also been called the West Dump. This area was still undergoing some reclamation. USMX has recently placed topsoil on this area and is in the process of reworking the surface. After they have finished placing the topsoil, they will rip along the contour or construct dozer basins, and then seed the area.

The section of haul road from the Moosehead Dump to the Beavertail pit, has some outslopes that have been topsoiled but have not been ripped or seeded. These areas will need to be ripped along the contour or have dozer basins constructed, and then be seeded. Photographs were taken of these road outslopes.

Beavertail Pit

The next area visited was the Beavertail Pit, which was the southern most pit of the series. Photographs of this pit will reveal a long, rocky slope with no topsoil in place. The other slope and road at this area have been topsoiled. Reclamation of this area is approximately one year old. Revegetation success here was good, although not as successful as some of the other areas which are also one year old.

Photographs were taken of the upper highwalls of the Beavertail pit and the small impoundment that has been created. In general, revegetation success for this area is good for one year's worth of growth.

After this we returned to the office for a wrap-up meeting. In conclusion, Larry Gore of the BLM, was to write a memo or recommendation stating the BLM would recommend release of nearly all the monies listed in USMX's letter. The line item amount in that letter which would not be released would be the 35% revegetation amount. After receiving the BLM's letter, the Division would then send a letter documenting the inspection and approving a reduced surety amount and requesting USMX to post a new surety. This letter would possibly go out in the next two weeks. Reclamation surety release for partial reclamation has to be approved by the Division Director.

For our information, Jim and Bob informed us they would not be available for the next 30 days because of a work assignment at a USMX site in Alaska.

jb
cc: Jim Smith, USMX
Larry Gore, BLM, Dixie RA
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